

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 21117 210020Z
ACTION EUR-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 21117

LIMDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST FROM HARTMAN

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP ECON EFIN FR US UR
SUBJECT: BRIEF TALK WITH PRIME MINISTER BARRE

1. I HAD AN INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER BARRE TODAY AND HE EXPRESSED GREAT APPRECIATION FOR OUR AGREEMENT TO THE DATES FOR HIS VISIT IN SEPTEMBER. HE SAID THAT AS SOON AS WE COULD REACH AGREEMENT ON A JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SEE IT RELEASED SO THAT THE VISIT COULD BE SPOKEN OF PUBLICLY. OUR CONVERSATION CENTERED MAINLY ON EXCHANGES OF REMINISCENCES ABOUT BRUSSELS AND A FEW WORDS ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD ECONOMY. AS HE TOLD MIKE BLUMENTHAL RECENTLY HE IS PUZZLED BY THE DIFFICULTY OF STIMULATING ALL THE DEVELOPED ECONOMIES AND HE IS NOW PARTICULARLY PUZZLED BY THE BEHAVIOR OF THE DOLLAR. HE HAD NO EXPLANATION FOR ITS CONTINUED FALL SINCE HE CONSIDERS THAT THE U.S. ECONOMY IS IN A VERY STRONG POSITION. HE IS ALSO WORRIED THAT THE GERMAN ECONOMY IS NOT PICKING UP FAST ENOUGH AND HE ATTRIBUTES SOME OF THE SLUGGISHNESS TO THE DIFFICULTY OF GETTING THE GERMANS TO ALTER THEIR CONSUMPTION HABITS.
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2. I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY OF OUR BRIEF CONVERSATION TO SAY THAT I WAS PUZZLED BY PRESIDENT GISCARD'S PESSIMISM ABOUT THE STATE OF DETENTE AND PARTICULARLY HIS USE OF THE WORD "JEOPARDIZE" TO DESCRIBE ACTIONS OF OUR GOVERNMENT. BARRE SAID THAT THAT PART OF THE INTERVIEW HAS BEEN INTERPRETED IN A MUCH TOO

EXTREME FORM. HE SAID THAT HE WAS SURE THE PRESIDENT
HAD BEEN TALKING ABOUT THE EFFECT OF SOME OF THE EARLY
STATEMENTS BY THE ADMINISTRATION ON THE SOVIET
LEADERSHIP---RATHER THAN GIVING IT AS HIS OPINION
OF THE ACTUAL STATE OF DETENTE TODAY. I THINK THAT
THIS IS A RATHER LAME EXPLANATION BUT SINCE THE PRESS
IN PARIS AND I SUSPECT SOME OF GISCARD'S COLLEAGUES
IN THE 9 WILL TAKE HIM TO TASK, THERE ISN'T MUCH THAT
WE NEED DO AT THIS POINT. I AM TAKING THE LINE WITH
THE PRESS HERE THAT WE DO NOT SHARE GISCARD'S
PESSIMISM ON THE STATE OF DETENTE, ALTHOUGH WE ADMIT
THAT THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES IN OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH
THE SOVIETS.

HARTMAN

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Message Attributes

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